

AMENDMENT TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A method for producing coated activated carbon material, comprising providing activated carbon material, combining a binding agent comprising a silicone compound and a masking agent selected from the group consisting of titanium dioxide, silica, alumina, calcium carbonate, calcium sulfate, calcium bicarbonate, mica, zinc oxide, magnesium oxide, zirconium oxide, and combinations thereof to form a coating liquor including 5% to 95% by weight of the masking agent, coating the activated carbon material with the coating liquor, curing the coating liquor to form a coating material, wherein the coating material on the activated carbon material comprises an add-on level of at least about 5% and is substantially water insoluble.

2. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein the binding agent has a Shore A hardness of less than about 70.

3. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein the binding agent is elastomeric.

4. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein coating comprises fluidizing the activated carbon material.

5. (Withdrawn) The method of Claim 1, wherein coating comprises dry coating of the activated carbon.

6. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein the coating liquor is curable at room temperature.

7. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein the coating liquor comprises a catalyst.

8. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein the coating liquor comprises an aqueous emulsion.

9. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein curing comprises drying the coating liquor.

10. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein curing comprises applying energy to the coating liquor in the form of at least one of infrared energy, heated gas, microwave radiation, and radiofrequency energy, wherein the temperature of the coating liquor is brought to at least 100°C.

11. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein the pigment has an absolute HunterLab "a" value or absolute HunterLab "b" value greater than 10.

12. (Canceled)

13. (Currently Amended) A method for producing coated activated carbon material, comprising providing activated carbon material, applying a substantially water insoluble elastomeric binding agent to the activated carbon material, applying a masking agent comprising mineral particles to the activated carbon material, and curing the binding agent, wherein the applied binding agent and the masking agent form a coating material comprising 5% to 95% by weight of the masking agent and an add-on level of at least about 5%.

14. (Withdrawn) The method of Claim 13, wherein curing the binding agent occurs before applying the masking agent.

15. (Withdrawn) The method of Claim 13, wherein curing the binding agent occurs after applying the masking agent.

16. (Withdrawn) The method of Claim 13, wherein applying the masking agent comprises dry coating of the masking agent onto the exposed surfaces of at least one of the activated carbon material and the binding agent.

17. (Original) The method of Claim 13, wherein applying the masking agent comprises applying an aqueous suspension of a white or colored pigment.

18. (Original) The method of Claim 13, further comprising combining the masking agent and the binding agent prior to applying the binding agent to the activated carbon material.

19. (Canceled)

20. (Currently Amended) A method of coating activated carbon, the method comprising:

combining a masking agent comprising mineral particles and a binding agent comprising a silicone compound to form a coating liquor including 5% to 95% by weight of the masking agent;

introducing the activated carbon into a coating chamber of a coating apparatus;

introducing a gaseous flow into the coating chamber;

fluidizing the activated carbon with the gaseous flow;

spraying the coating liquor into the coating chamber;

coating the activated carbon with the coating liquor; and

curing the coating liquor to form a substantially water insoluble coating material comprising an add-on level of at least about 5%.

21. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 20, wherein the masking agent comprises at least one mineral selected from the group consisting of titanium dioxide, silica, alumina, calcium carbonate, calcium sulfate, calcium bicarbonate, mica, zinc oxide, magnesium oxide, and zirconium oxide.

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22. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 13, wherein the binding agent comprises a silicone compound.